

During most of her life, Miss Roper had been interested in monumental effigies, and had visited nearly every church in Gloucestershire and Bristol and many in Somerset to collect information. This culminated in 1930 in the publication of a handsome volume on "Monumental Effigies of Gloucestershire and Bristol".

H. S. T.

WE regret to announce the following deaths :

Dr. Arthur Bramley, head of the Department of Pure and Applied Science at Loughborough College, on July 19, aged fifty-six years.

Sir John MacFarland, Chancellor of the University

of Melbourne since 1918, a member of the Royal Commission (1899) on Technical Education, Victoria, and of the Government Board (1908) for the Protection of Aborigines, on July 22, aged eighty-four years.

Mr. L. M. Nesbitt, who was awarded the Murchison Grant in 1931 of the Royal Geographical Society for "his difficult journey through the Danakil country of Abyssinia", on July 20, as the result of an aeroplane disaster near the San Bernino Pass, Switzerland.

Sir James Watt, a well-known stock-breeder and forester, formerly chairman of the Forest Tree Growers under the Forestry Commission, on July 1, aged ninety-three years.

## News and Views

### International Folk Dance Conference

IN another column of this issue of NATURE (see p. 154) there appears a brief account of the conference, which formed part of the International Folk Dance Festival held in London last week. Lack of space for fuller reference does less than justice to a kaleidoscopic spectacle, of which the interest to students of the development of social custom and religious belief, more particularly in Europe, was profound. In its general results, the conference on the scientific aspect of the folk dance has made a very appreciable contribution to the advancement of this branch of the study of the art and life of the 'primitive' element in European populations, both of to-day and in the past. In its effect on future development, it should stimulate the application of that study to the revival and extension of the practice of folk dancing, as well as, possibly, lead to restoration of forgotten or neglected elements where traditional dances and customs are still a living factor in peasant life, as has already happened in certain of the dances which appeared at the festival. On the other hand, the references of many speakers to the obsolescence of traditional customs and dances among the folk and the contrast in the spirit of such dances as those of eastern Europe—for example, the hobby horse dance of the Calușari from Rumania—when the dance is a living functioning element, integral in rural life, argues that the folk dance as a revived art can become a factor in communal life once more only as an attenuated and, to a considerable degree, sophisticated form of expression. Its essential meaning vanishes with the fading away of its economic and magical background.

### African Problems

SIR MALCOLM HAILEY, lately Governor of the United Provinces, India, and now director of the African Research Survey, accompanied by Mr. Donald Malcolm, formerly of East Africa, will leave England on August 15 for the purpose of a prolonged

journey of investigation on the African continent. During an absence which is expected to extend over a period of eight or nine months, Sir Malcolm Hailey will be engaged in testing and amplifying material which has been collected for a survey of African problems in a report to be published, if possible, in 1937. The survey has been undertaken by a Committee, of which Lord Lothian is chairman, as the result of a suggestion, made by General Smuts in his Rhodes lecture at Oxford in 1929, that it was time to consider how far the resources of modern knowledge were being applied to the problems of Africa, and how far it was possible to co-ordinate the experience of the different territories. The scope of the survey has been limited to Africa south of the Sahara. It will deal with the problems of each territory in the administrative, economic and scientific fields, and will estimate the character and amount of the material available for their study, as well as suggest the lines on which further research and extended study might prove profitable. The aim of the report will be to state facts rather than to criticise methods and results. Dr. E. B. Worthington, of the Department of Zoology, University of Cambridge, has been engaged for some time in digesting the facts relating to research bearing on Africa in all the physical sciences, and a similar digest is being prepared in the economic field. Funds for the cost of the survey have been provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

### Academic Assistance Council

THE second annual report of the Academic Assistance Council, published on July 20, contains a statistical summary of the present position of the 1,300 German university teachers dismissed as 'non-Aryans' or for political reasons. Approximately 650 emigrated from Germany; of these, 287 are already re-established in permanent positions and 336 of the others are being temporarily assisted to continue their research. The importance of organised academic